

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 313378 TOSEC 340136  
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TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 313378 TOSEC 340136

NODIS

CHEROKEE FOR SECRETARY FROM BYROADE

FOLLOWING IS REPEAT ISLAMABAD 13227, SENT SECSTATE 30 DEC 76:

QUOTE S E C R E T ISLAMABAD 13227

NODIS CHEROKEE

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM BYROADE

1. AFTER REVIEWING MORE THOROUGHLY THAN I WAS ABLE TO  
EARLIER ALL THE NUANCES AND IMPLICATIONS OF BHUTTO'S  
CHRISTMAS EVE DISCUSSION WITH ME, I'VE CONCLUDED THAT WE  
ARE CLOSER TO THE POSSIBILITY OF MAKING A DEAL, IN TIME,  
WITH BHUTTO ON THE REPROCESSING ISSUE THAN I HAD PREVIOUSLY  
REPORTED. (ISLAMABAD 13074.) IN LIGHT OF THIS, I WANT  
TO REQUEST YOUR HELP, USING THE EXPERTISE OF THOSE IN THE  
CURRENT ADMINISTRATION WHO ARE FAMILIAR WITH THE HISTORY  
OF HOW WE GOT WHERE NOW ARE, IN WORKING OUT THE ELEMENTS  
OF A POSSIBLE PACKAGE DEAL.

2. MY JUDGEMENT IS THAT BHUTTO IS IN THE PROCESS OF  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 313378 TOSEC 340136

ACCEPTING AS A FACT THAT HE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO GET THE  
REPROCESSING PLANT. I COULD BE WRONG ON THIS AS HE HAS  
NOT MADE THAT ADMISSION DIRECTLY TO ME AND I CAN WELL  
UNDERSTAND HIS REASONS FOR NOT WANTING TO DO SO AT THIS  
TIME. BUT HE DID IN FACT COME VERY CLOSE TO TIPPING HIS  
HAND WITH ME IN OUR CHRISTMAS EVE TALK. AT ONE POINT HE

STARTED TO SPELL OUT THE MILITARY AND ECONOMIC AGREEMENTS HE WOULD LIKE TO WORK OUT WITH US WHEN THE TIME CAME. HE MENTIONED THE A-7S WITH FMS CREDITS PERTAINING THERETO AND POSSIBLY TO CERTAIN OTHER THINGS, AND THEN ABRUPTLY STOPPED WITH AN EXPRESSION THAT I INTERPRETED TO BE A RECOGNITION THAT HE WAS COMING VERY CLOSE TO TELLING ME HE WOULD MAKE A DEAL WHEN THE TIME CAME THAT WOULD DO AWAY WITH THE REPROCESSING ISSUE. (IN THE REALM OF PURE SPECULATION, BUT PEGGED SOMEWHAT TO BHUTTO'S MORE DEFINITE POSITION ON "DELAY" AS REPORTED IN THE REFTTEL, I AM LEFT WONDERING WHETHER THE FRENCH, AND PERHAPS EVEN THE SHAH, KNOW NOW THAT BHUTTO WILL AGREE TO A REASONABLE WAY OUT AFTER HIS ELECTIONS BUT HAVE PLEDGED TO PROTECT HIM PUBLICLY, AND WITH US, UNTIL AFTER THE BALLOTING IS OVER.)

3. I HOPE THAT THE DILEMMA POSED BY THESE UPCOMING ELECTIONS WILL BE UNDERSTOOD AT HOME. I THINK THAT WE MUST RECOGNIZE AND ACCEPT THE VALIDITY OF BHUTTO'S CONTENTION THAT IT IS SIMPLY NOT POLITICALLY FEASIBLE FOR HIM TO MAKE SUCH A DEAL, INVOLVING AS IT WOULD SOME FORM OF PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF A STEPDOWN, BEFORE THE VOTING TAKES PLACE IN MARCH. I KNOW THAT THERE ARE SOME WHO WILL ARGUE THAT BHUTTO HAS NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT FROM THE PAK ELECTORATE. I DON'T MYSELF DOUBT THAT HE WILL WIN. BUT THE HARD POLITICAL REALITY IS THAT ANY PUBLIC CLIMBDOWN, HOWEVER PHRASED AND "SWEETENED", COULD WELL CHANGE THE WHOLE COMPLEXION OF THE CAMPAIGN. IT WOULD GIVE THE OPPOSITION THE POPULAR ISSUE TO USE AGAINST BHUTTO THEY HAVE UP TILL NOW BEEN VAINLY SEEKING. WE KNOW FROM OUR OWN SOUDINGS  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03     STATE 313378 TOSEC 340136

HOW POTENT SUCH AN ISSUE CAN BE, PARTICULARLY IN THE PUNJAB HEARTLAND, WHERE THE REPROCESSING PLANT IS SEEN IN TERMS OF NATIONAL PRESTIGE AND NATIONAL SECURITY VIS-A-VIS NUCLEAR INDIA. WE HAVE EVERY REASON TO BELIEVE THAT BHUTTO WOULD TAKE ALL MEASURES HE CONSIDERED NECESSARY TO WARD OFF THE CHALLENGE THE OPPOSITION WILL SEEK TO DEVELOP ON THIS ISSUE, INCLUDING STEPS (E.G. THE JAILING OF THE MORE OUTSPOKEN AND EFFECTIVE OF THE OPPOSITION LEADERS) WHICH COULD LEAD TO THE QUESTIONING OF THE LEGITIMACY OF HIS EVENTUAL ELECTION VICTORY. (HE MIGHT ALSO CHOOSE TO POSTPONE THE ELECTION A LA INDIRA. THIS WOULD LEAVE HIM OPEN TO CHARGES THAT HE HAD CAPITULATED IN A FLAGRANT DEAL AGAINST THE BEST SECURITY INTERESTS OF PAKISTAN AND COULD NOT FACE THE ELECTORATE. IF ANYTHING, IT WOULD BE WORSE FROM OUR INTERESTS AND PROBABLY FROM HIS.) BHUTTO WOULD STILL STAND TO SUFFER POLITICAL DAMAGE IN A POST-ELECTION CLIMBDOWN, BUT THAT WOULD TAKE PLACE IN A MUCH LESS VOLATILE ATMOSPHERE AND COULD BE

MORE EFFECTIVELY DEALT WITH IN THE WAKE OF THE EXPECTED  
MASSIVE RENEWAL OF HIS POPULAR MANDATE.

4. IF BHUTTO CONTINUES TO TAKE THE POSITION THE HE  
CANNOT GO PUBLIC BEFORE THE ELECTIONS ARE OUT OF THE WAY --  
AND IF WE PUSH HIM ANY FURTHER THAN I HAVE ON THIS HE MAY  
WELL CONCLUDE THAT WE ARE NOT CONCERNED ABOUT HIS POLITICAL  
POSITION -- THAT DOESN'T MEAN THAT NEGOTIATIONS CAN'T BE  
INITIATED WELL BEFORE THAT ON THE TERMS OF A PACKAGE  
DEAL INVOLVING A JOINT FRENCH-PAK ANNOUNCEMENT OF A MORE  
OR LESS INDEFINITE POSTPONEMENT OF THE REPROCESSING PLANT  
AND FRENCH/US ASSISTANCE IN MEETING PAKISTAN'S CONVENTIONAL  
ARMS AND NUCLEAR ENERGY REQUIREMENTS. I RECOGNIZE THAT THERE  
ARE THOSE IN THE BUREAUCRACY WHO HAVE ALREADY SPOKEN OF SUCH A  
DEAL AS A FORM OF BLACKMAIL. I'M SURE THAT YOU ESPECIALLY ARE  
INTRIGUED BY THE PROPOSITION THAT GIVING SOMETHING TO GET SOME-  
THING OF GREAT IMPORTANCE IS AN EVIL PROCESS. BUT LEAVING LOADED  
WORDS ASIDE, I THINK THAT A VERY LEGITIMATE CASE CAN BE MADE  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04     STATE 313378 TOSEC 340136

NOT ONLY (1) THAT PAKISTAN HAS A REAL NEED FOR THE CONVENTIONAL  
ARMS, E.G. A-7S, AND ASSISTANCE IN NUCLEAR ENERGY DEVELOPMENT  
LIKELY TO BE PART OF SUCH A PACKAGE, BUT ALSO THAT (2) THE RENUN-  
CIATION OF THE REPROCESSING PLANT, PUBLICLY ADVERTISED AS  
IMPORTANT TO PAKISTAN'S POWER GENERATING POTENTIAL AND WIDELY  
REGARDED HERE AS NECESSARY FOR PAK SECURITY, ENHANCES THIS NEED  
BOTH IN TERMS OF COMPENSATION FOR WHAT HAS BEEN LOST AND IN THE  
CONTEXT OF BHUTTO'S POLITICAL WELL-BEING.

5. AS BHUTTO WEIGHS THE APPRECIATION OF THE DILEMMA HE IS IN (NOW  
REINFORCED BY HIS FORTUITOUS DISCUSSION WITH THE SHAH) HE  
MIGHT COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT HIS BEST BET WOULD BE TO  
NEGOTIATE A DEAL NOW WITH US QUITE SECRETLY AND LET THE INCOMING  
ADMINISTRATION KNOW THROUGH US THAT THE PROBLEM WAS SOLVABLE AND  
WOULD NOT BE THE OCCASION FOR AN IMMEDIATE PAK-US CONFRONTATION.  
IDEALLY, OF COURSE, IT WOULD BE BEST IF A DEAL COULD BE NEGOT-  
IATED WHICH WOULD HAVE THE ENDORSEMENT OF THE INCOMING ADMIN-  
ISTRATION, WITH THE OBVIOUS ADVANTAGE TO THE NEW ADMINISTRATION  
OF ACQUIESCING IN A PACKAGE WORKED OUT BY THE OUTGOING ONE. WHAT  
I WOULD HOPE YOU WOULD CONSIDER IS THE DEVELOPMENT OF A POSSIBLE  
PACKAGE AND YOUR DISCUSSING IT AS SOON AS YOU CAN WITH THE INCOMING  
ADMINISTRATION. (HAL SONNENFELDT TOLD ME JUST BEFORE I LEFT THAT  
WORK WOULD PROCEED ON SUCH A PACKAGE, BUT I FEAR THAT THAT MIGHT  
NOW BE CONSIDERED UNNECESSARY IN VIEW OF MY LAST MESSAGE  
INDICATING THAT BHUTTO WAS NOT LIKELY TO MOVE ON THIS ISSUE  
BEFORE THE ELECTIONS.) YOU CAN PRESENT THIS IN CONTEXT BETTER  
THAN ANYONE ELSE IN VIEW OF YOUR OWN PRIVATE TALKS WITH BHUTTO,  
YOUR OWN FEELINGS AS TO THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUING GOOD  
US-PAK RELATIONS, THE GEO-POLITICAL IMPORTANCE OF PAKISTAN, AND  
HOW WHAT WE DO HERE INFLUENCES OUR POSITION WITH CHINA AND THE

PERSIAN GULF NATIONS, PARTICULARLY PAKISTAN'S CLOSE FRIENDS THE SAUDIS AND IRANIANS. I WOULD HOPE THE NEW ADMINISTRATION WOULD WELCOME THE ENCOURAGING WORD THAN A DEAL ON THE BASIS OF YOUR PACKAGE HAS BECOME A DISTINCT POSSIBILITY. I COULD SEE THEM ADOPTING IT, OR SOME VERSION OF IT, AS THE STARTING POINT FOR SECRET NEGOTIATIONS DURING THE MONTHS LEADING UP TO THE PAK SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 313378 TOSEC 340136

ELECTIONS. (AN ADDED DIVIDEND OF NEGOTIATIONS TAKING PLACE DURING THE PAK ELECTION CAMPAIGN IS THAT THIS WOULD ENCOURAGE BHUTTO TO KEEP QUIET ON THE ISSUE, AND GENERALLY TO DEAL KINDLY WITH THE US. THERE WOULD, AS ALWAYS, BE THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE FACT OF THE NEGOTIATIONS WOULD LEAK, BUT SUCH LEAKS COULD BE CONVINCINGLY DENIED IN THE ABSENCE OF ANY NEED FOR CONGRESSIONS DISCLOSURE AT THAT TIME.)

6. IF SUCH A PACKAGE CAN BE DEvised, I NEED TO HAVE IT HERE AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. I WOULD, OF COURSE, NOT DISCLOSE IT PER SE TO BHUTTO. BUT HAVING A GENERAL BALL PARK IDEA OF WHAT IS FEASIBLE, I WOULD BE IN A POSITION TO DISCOURAGE ANY EXCESSIVE EXPECTATION, IF BHUTTO SHOULD INDICATE HE WANTS TO START SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS. SHOULD YOU HOWEVER SUCCEED IN ADVANCE AGREEMENT ON ITS TERMS WITH THE NEW ADMINISTRATION, I COULD THEN RECEIVE EXPLICIT INSTRUCTIONS TO TRY TO FINALIZE IT WITH BHUTTO.

7. BHUTTO IS NOT THAT IMPRESSED WITH OUR FORMAL ARGUMENTS -- HE HAD AN ANSWER FOR ALMOST ALL THE TALKING POINTS I CARRIED BACK TO HIM FROM THE DEPARTMENT -- BUT HE IS SERIOUSLY CONCERNED OVER THE POSITION HE IS IN WITH US AND OTHERS OVER THE REPROCESSING DEAL. IN THIS CONXTXT, IT IS CENTRAL TO KEEP IN MIND THAT WHILE WE ARE ASKING BHUTTO TO GIVE UP THE OPTION OF FOLLOWING INDIA'S ROUTE IN THE NUCLEAR FIELD, WE MUST OFFER SOME ELEMENTS OF ASSISTANCE IN BUILDING A CONVENTIONAL DEFENSE. YOU FULLY UNDERSTAND THIS EQUATION AND ARE UNIQUELY POSITIONED TO CONVEY THAT UNDERSTANDING TO THE NEW TEAM WHICH MAY NOT INITIALLY APPRECIATE ITS IMPORTANCE.

8. I RECOGNIZE THAT WITH A TRANSITION IN WASHINGTON AND AN ELECTION COMING UP IN PAKISTAN, THIS IS ONE HELL OF A TIME TO TRY TO DEAL WITH AN ISSUE AS SENSITIVE AND IMPORTANT AS THIS ONE HAS BECOME. BUT I HOPE, IF YOU POSSIBLY CAN, THAT YOU WILL AGREE THAT WE GET OURSELVES IN POSITION TO BE ABLE TO MAKE THE BEST POSSIBLE TRY. BYROADE UNQUOTE. ROBINSON

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